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# NEVADA CLIMATE SUMMARY

FOR JANUARY 1985

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State Climatologist

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## SYNOPSIS

For the second consecutive month temperatures were below normal over most of Nevada. In fact, a portion of the northern one-third of the State averaged over 10 degrees below normal. In Southern Nevada, the Lake Tahoe Basin, and in the Fallon-Austin area, January averages were near normal.

Precipitation was below normal except in the center portion of Nevada and in part of the South, and for the second month in a row, well below normal in the North-western portion of the State. In the Sierra Nevada headwaters of three of the five principal rivers in Nevada, the Truckee, Carson and Walker Rivers, the December-January mid-winter drought is a concern for water users, even though an early February storm relieved the situation somewhat. The December-March period normally produces most of the years precipitation in this area.

## TEMPERATURE

Temperatures during December were below normal over most of Nevada, with the greatest departures in the northern one-third of the State, where Battle Mountain averaged 11.5 degrees below normal, Winnemucca 10.7° below, and Owyhee was 7.2° below normal. This was the third coldest month ever recorded in the 94 year long record at Battle Mountain (average 17.2°), surpassed only by the extremely cold months of January 1949 (average 4.7°) and January 1937 (average 5.0°). Minimum temperatures fell to zero or below on about 1/2 the mornings at Battle Mountain, falling to -11° on the 14th, and maxima could rise no higher than 39° on the afternoon of the 6th. It was also very cold at Owyhee (-15°), Manhattan (north of Tonopah, -15°), Winnemucca (-9°), and Ely (-19°). In fact, Ely minima averaged about the same as at Battle Mountain (3.3° vs. 3.2°) with 15 days of low temperatures at zero or below.

At the other end of the mercury, temperatures were near normal in the Lake Tahoe Basin (Glenbrook averaged only 0.8° below normal and Incline 0.5° below), in the Fallon (+0.6°) and Austin (+0.1°) areas, and in Southern Nevada (Boulder City -0.1°, and Las Vegas -0.2°). Laughlin recorded the warmest temperature in Nevada during January, with a 73° reading on the 20th. In fact, only one night dropped to the freezing mark at this mild Colorado River location at the southern tip of the State.

With below normal temperatures over much of Nevada, heating requirements were greater than normal, ranging from over 1300 heating degree day units in most of the Northeast and part of the Northwest (HI = 1483 at Battle Mountain) to less than 600 at lower elevations in Southern Nevada (LO = 424 at Laughlin).

## PRECIPITATION

For the second consecutive month during the major precipitation producing portion of the year, and the second January in a row, rain/snow were well below normal in the Sierra Nevada portion of far Western Nevada. For example, in the Lake Tahoe Basin at Incline only 1.72" of precipitation (20% of normal) has fallen during the past 2 months (.84" in January), whereas the 2 month normal is 8.32"!

Continuing the trend of the past several months, part of Southern Nevada again experienced above normal precipitation, with Searchlight, the wettest recording spot in the State, receiving 1.44", nearly twice the normal amount. Nearby Laughlin was not far behind with 1.11", and Boulder City measured .97". Other wet spots in the State were Pioche (near Caliente) with 1.26", and Austin with 1.20", just a little above normal, and Tonopah, with .54", or about 1 3/4 times normal.

Preliminary data indicates that portions of the northern 1/3 of the State were the driest, with Dufuranna, west of Denio, (.10"), Montello, in the northeast corner of the State (.13"), and Orovada, north of Winnemucca (.15"), at the bottom of the precipitation gauge stick.

Snowfall was deficient over much of Nevada during January as most snow producing areas experienced below normal precipitation. The Austin area in the center of the State had the greatest reported snowfall, 16", which is 4" above average. Battle Mountain (9" vs an average 4") and Winnemucca (9" vs an average 7") were also above normal during January.

Even though the figure is below normal, the greatest recorded snow depth in Nevada at the end of January was 64" at 8500 foot Tahoe Meadows in the Carson Range near Incline. The upper Tent Mountain snow course at 8300 feet in the Ruby Mountains near Elko, had a snowfall of 59", which was near normal.

## SUNSHINE AND WIND

Sunshine was above normal in Southern Nevada (e.g. Las Vegas 87% of normal, with an average of 76%) and in the northeastern 1/3 of the State (e.g. Winnemucca 64%, vs an average of 48%, and Ely 73% vs an average of 66%). In other portions of the Silver State January sunshine hours were near or a little below normal (e.g. Reno 62% vs a normal of 66%).

Wind speeds were below normal in all but Southern Nevada, but no strong winds were recorded anywhere, including normally very windy 9700 foot Slide Mountain near Reno. This month's peak gust there reached only 49 mph.

## ADDENDUM

Additional December 1984 data is now available, indicating that Nevada's lowest temperature during that month was -35°, recorded at Wildhorse Reservoir, south of Owyhee. It was also -24° at Mountain City, also near Owyhee, and -26° at Deeth, near Elko.

## 1984 CLIMATE SUMMARY

1984 was a year of climatic contrast both in time and space, with unusual dryness in Western Nevada (e.g. Reno had only 4.28" or 57% of normal precipitation, Incline and Glenbrook 70%, and Fallon 72%), and record breaking and near record wetness in the South and parts of the Northeast. For example, Boulder City had

the wettest year since records began there in 1931, with 13.74" of rain (240% of normal), shattering the 1941 fall of 10.52"! Searchlight (167% of normal), Ely (164%), Winnemucca (166%) and Las Vegas (163%) were also well above normal.

The table below summarizes the wettest and driest weather reporting sites in Nevada, both for total precipitation and for % of normal for 1984.

HIGHEST PRECIPITATION TOTALS

Owyhee	22.29"
Arthur	19.55
Ruby Lake	19.16
Incline	17.98
Daggett Pass	16.93

LOWEST PRECIPITATION TOTALS

Fallon NAS	3.79"
Hawthorne	3.86
Reno WSFO	4.28
Yerington	4.39
Tonopah	5.95

HIGHEST % OF NORMAL PRECIP.

Boulder City	240%
Searchlight	167
Ely	164
Winnemucca	164
Las Vegas	163
Owyhee	159

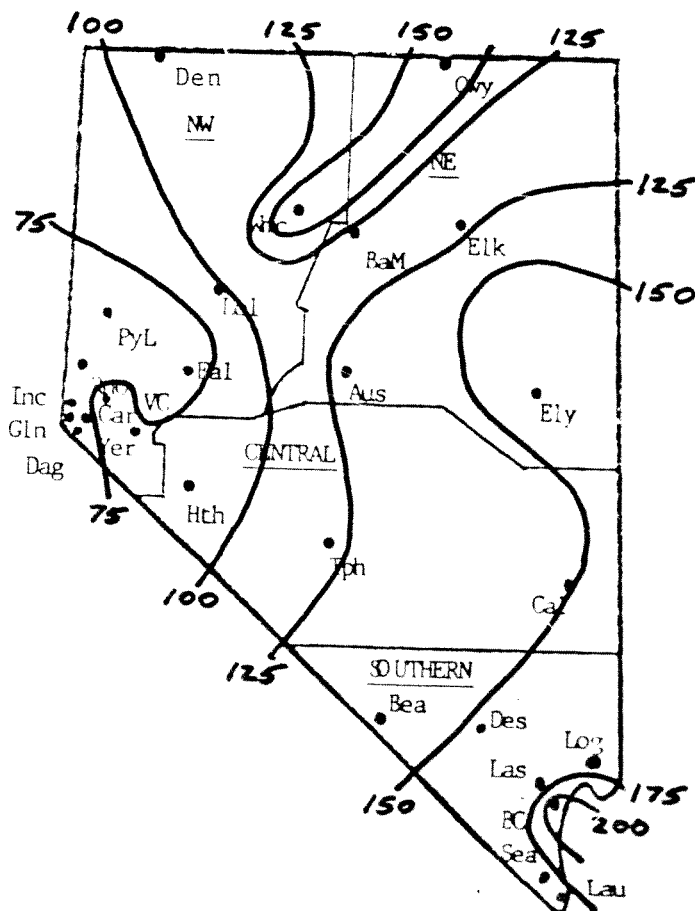
LOWEST % OF NORMAL PRECIP.

Reno WSFO	57%
Glenbrook	70
Incline	70
Fallon NAS	72
Yerington	80
Hawthorne	84

Nevada's wettest day in 1984 - July 23rd - 4.09" fell at Elgin 3 SE (south of Caliente).

1984 was a cooler than normal year over most of Nevada, with January, February, April, June, October and December being generally below normal, and March, May, August, and September above normal. When compared to normal, October and December were the coldest months and May the warmest. In fact, October was one of the colder 10th months on record in the State, with averages 4-6° below normal everywhere, and up to 8° below at Austin and Hawthorne. New low temperatures for so early in the Fall were set at Ely (5°), Austin (9°) and Searchlight (35°). Temperatures during December were below normal over all of Nevada, and well below normal in parts of the Central and NE regions, where averages were as much as 8° below normal. The mercury fell to -35° at Wildhorse Reservoir (south of Owyhee) on both December 17th and 18th for Nevada's lowest recorded temperature during 1984.

PERCENTAGE OF NORMAL PRECIPITATION  
1984



On the warm side of 1984, during May temperatures were well above average over most of Nevada, with departures reaching over 7° above in Southern Nevada, where it was the warmest May on record. Several May temperature records were set, with 115° readings at both Laughlin and Las Vegas Wash the highest ever reported in Nevada during May.

Although temperatures during July were near normal, there was a noteworthy climatic occurrence, as extremely hot weather during the July 4th weekend produced temperatures of 120° or over at several locations along the shores of Lakes Mead and Mohave and the Colorado River. A 122° reading on July 5th at Las Vegas Wash tied the all-time Nevada record for any month, set at Overton in June 1954, and at Leeland (near Lathrop Wells in Southern Nye County) in August 1914.

NOTE: The State Climatology Office has a file of newspaper clippings concerning "weather happenings" in Nevada. We would appreciate receiving copies of any such items that your might run across. Thanks very much to Art Beeghly of the Battle Mountain Bugle and Ed Vogel of the Las Vegas Review Journal for using information from our Monthly Weather Summaries in their newspapers and sending us copies of those and other weather articles.

John W. James  
State Climatologist for Nevada

## PRELIMINARY NEVADA CLIMATE DATA

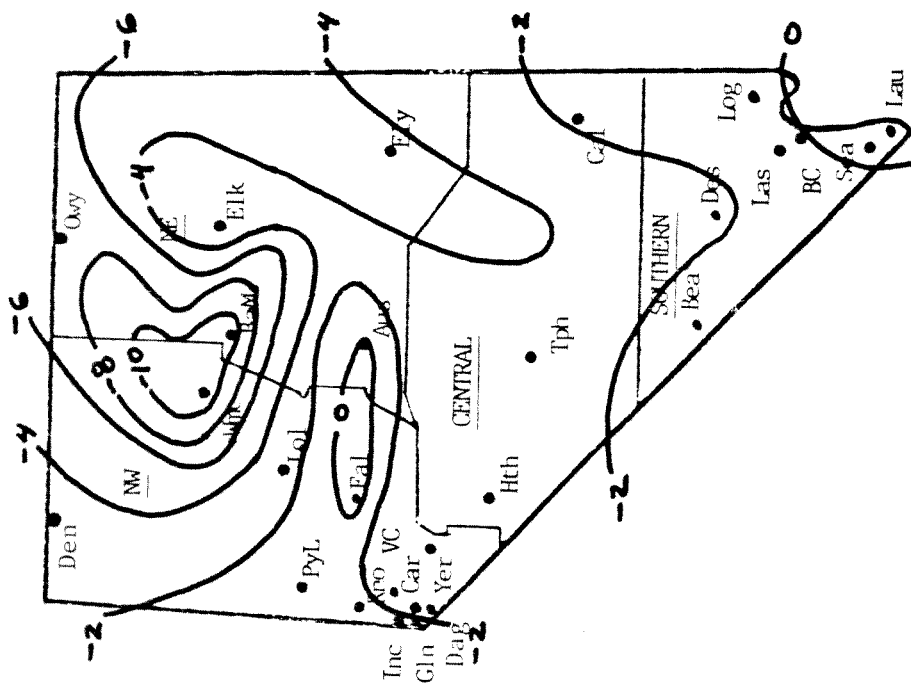
LOCATION	ELEV	MAX	MIN	MEAN	DEPART	HIGHEST	LOWEST	HEATING		PRECIP	DEPART	GR	
								DEGREE	DAYS			24HR	SNOWFALL
-----													
<u>Northwest</u>													
Carson City	4650'	41.3	17.2	29.2	-4.2	18th 61	31st 5	1108	+141	.36	-1.78	—	2"
Daggett Pass	7380	39.5	20.5	30.0	-	17th 58	13th 4	-	-	.73	-	8th .28	12
Denio	4185	36.9	16.1	26.5	-	21st 45*	30th 6*	-	-	.26	-	8th .11	7½
Dufurena	4800	36.1	11.1	23.6	-	18th 51*	13th -2	-	-	.10	-	31st .10	1
Fallon NAS	3935	40.2	19.9	28.5	+0.6	20th 50*	2nd 11*	1090	-	.24	- .20	7th .13	2
Glenbrook	6400	41.0	22.3	31.6	-0.8	20th 53*	30th 8	1030	+ 19	.87	-2.55	28th .47	6
Incline	6525	38.3	22.3	30.3	-0.5	18th 49	30th 9	-	-	.84	-4.21	26th .39	13
Reno AP	4410	41.9	19.3	30.6	-1.6	19th 57	1st 12	1060	+ 43	.24	-1.00	26th .12	4½
Reno UNR	4550	41.0	21.2	31.1	-	19th 54*	13th 12	-	-	.35	-	26th .23	4
Virginia City	6340	37.6	21.1	29.4	-3.7	18th 58	31st 7	1105	+106	.29	-1.69	7th .09	3
Winnemucca	4305	32.6	5.6	19.1	-10.7	6th 42*	31st -9*	1415	+324	.83	-.06	8th .73	9
Yerington	4375	41.3	17.2	29.2	-3.8	19th 55	13th 9	1112	+120	.19	-.41	8th .14	1
<u>Northeast</u>													
Austin	6605	39.0	16.7	27.8	+0.1	18th 58	31st -3	1151	+ 82	1.20	+ .15	7th .47	16
Battle Mountain	4350	31.2	3.20	17.2	-11.5	6th 39	14th -11	1483	+358	.76	+ .09	8th .41	9

LOCATION	ELEV	MAX	MIN	MEAN	DEPART	HIGHEST	LOWEST	HEATING		PRECIP	DEPART	GR. 24HR	SNOWFALL
								DEGREE DAYS	DAYS				
(Base = 65°)													
Elko	5135	34.3	9.3	21.8	-3.2	19th 45	31st -6	1331	+ 91	.54	- .62	8th .28	5½"
Ely	6260	35.8	3.3	19.5	-4.9	19th 53	31st -19	1402	+143	.49	- .23	8th .28	6½
Owyhee	5400	32.5	7.9	20.2	-7.2	19th 47	30th -15	1389	+233	.53	- .84	-	-
Central													
Caliente	4865	42.2	19.5	30.8	-1.8	19th 57	31st 6	1021	+ 13	.83	- .01	-	-
Hawthorne	4215	42.5	21.3	31.9	-3.0	19th 52	31st 13	1019	+ 80	.44	+ .05	2nd .30	1
Tonopah	5425	38.5	16.3	27.4	-3.5	19th 50	13th 4	1164	+107	.54	+ .23	8th .23	2
Southern													
Beatty 8N	3550	50.1	30.7	40.4	-1.0	18th 65	31st 15	-	-	.31	- .27	8th .13	0
Boulder City	2525	54.1	38.5	46.3	- .01	20th 62	31st 30	579	- 1	.97	+ .39	7th .43	0
Desert Rock	3300	52.0	30.8	41.4	-2.2	20th 66	31st 19	722	+ 69	.79	-	7th .68	0
Las Vegas	2170	54.3	34.5	44.4	-0.2	20th 62*	24th 31	629	- 3	.19	- .31	7th .19	0
Laughlin	550	62.8	39.7	51.2	-	20th 73	13th 32	429	-	1.11	-	8th .80	0
Logandale	1320	59.5	33.9	46.7	-	19th 68	31st 24	-	-	.62	-	8th .32	0
Searchlight	3540	-	-	-	-	18th 69	31st 19	-	-	1.44	+ .70	7th .70	0

\*Latest of more than one occurrence

DEPARTURE OF MEAN TEMPERATURE  
FROM NORMAL (F°)

JANUARY 1985



PERCENTAGE OF NORMAL PRECIPITATION

JANUARY 1985

